

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please CANCEL claims 5, 10, 13 and 14 without prejudice to or disclaimer of their subject matter.

Please AMEND claims 1, 6 and 7, as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus which can be connected to a sheet processing apparatus having a plurality of sheet storage trays of which positions are changeable, and has a plurality of operation modes including at least two modes from among a copy mode, an image communication mode, and a printer mode, said apparatus, comprising:

first setting means for setting a relationship between each of operation modes and each of sheet storage trays, where, when the image forming apparatus works in an operation mode, a sheet storage tray assigned to the working operation mode is moved to a sheet discharge position of the image forming apparatus;

second setting means for manually setting one operation mode from among the operation modes as an auto-clear mode and storing information specifying the operation mode set as the auto-clear mode;

determination means for determining whether a no-operation state by an operator continues for a predetermined time after the processing of an operation mode has been completed;

auto-clear operation means for automatically setting the image forming apparatus to a predetermined operation mode from among the plurality of operation modes the

operation mode set as the auto-clear mode on the basis of a determination result of said determination means; and

control means for, in response to said auto-clear operation means ~~setting the image forming apparatus to the predetermined operation mode~~, controlling the sheet processing apparatus so as to change the position of a sheet storage tray, which is assigned to the predetermined operation mode as the auto-clear mode, to a sheet discharge position of the image forming apparatus, so that the sheet storage tray can store a sheet even if not receiving a job data for the predetermined operation mode set as the auto-clear mode.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a user interface including a display device commonly used in the respective modes, wherein in response to said auto-clear operation means setting the image forming apparatus to the predetermined operation mode, display control is performed to display a window corresponding to the predetermined operation mode.

4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising setting means for selecting a mode to be set to by said auto-clear operation means.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) A control method for an image forming apparatus which can be connected to a sheet processing apparatus having a plurality of sheet storage trays of which positions are changeable, and has a plurality of operation modes including at least two modes from among a copy mode, an image communication mode, and a printer mode, said method comprising:

a step of setting a relationship between each of operation modes and each of sheet storage trays, where, when the image forming apparatus works in an operation mode, a sheet storage tray assigned to the working operation mode is moved to a sheet discharge position of the image forming apparatus;

a step of manually setting one operation mode from among the operation modes as an auto-clear mode and storing information specifying the operation mode set as the auto-clear mode;

a step of determining whether a no-operation state by an operator continues for a predetermined time after the processing of an operation mode has been completed;

a step of automatically setting the image forming apparatus to a predetermined operation mode from among the plurality of operation modes the operation mode set as the auto-clear mode on the basis of a determination result in the determination step; and

a step of, in response to the operation mode setting the image forming apparatus to the predetermined operation mode in the operation mode shifting step, controlling the sheet processing apparatus so as to change the position of [[a]] the sheet storage tray, which is assigned to the predetermined operation mode as the auto-clear mode, to a sheet discharge

position of the image forming apparatus, so that the sheet storage tray can store a sheet even if not receiving a job data for the predetermined operation mode set as the auto-clear mode.

7. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium which stores a program for causing an image forming apparatus which can be connected to a sheet processing apparatus having a plurality of sheet storage trays of which positions are changeable and has a plurality of operation modes including at least two modes from among a copy mode, an image communication mode, and a printer mode, to execute the following steps, comprising:

a step of setting a relationship between each of operation modes and each of sheet storage trays, where, when the image forming apparatus works in an operation mode, a sheet storage tray assigned to the working operation mode is moved to a sheet discharge position of the image forming apparatus;

a step of manually setting one operation mode from among the operation modes as an auto-clear mode and storing information specifying the operation mode set as the auto-clear mode;

a step of determining whether a no-operation state by an operator continues for a predetermined time after the processing of an operation mode has been completed;

a step of automatically setting the image forming apparatus to a predetermined operation mode from among the plurality of operation modes the operation mode set as the auto-clear mode on the basis of a determination result in the determination step; and

a step of, in response to the operation mode setting the image forming apparatus to the predetermined operation mode in the operation mode shifting step, controlling

the sheet processing apparatus so as to change the position of [[a]] the sheet storage tray, which is assigned to the ~~predetermined~~ operation mode as the auto-clear mode, to a sheet discharge position of the image forming apparatus, so that the sheet storage tray can store a sheet even if not receiving job data for the ~~predetermined~~ operation mode set as the auto-clear mode.

8-14. (Cancelled)